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The Dennis Report

STRANGERS ON A BRIDGE: THE CASE CPYRGHT OF COLONEL ABEL by James B. Donovan. 432 pages. Atheneum. \$6.95.

torney James B. Donovan received a Abel would never talk and that the tria cablegram from Berlin which said only:
HAPPY NEW YEAR—HELEN. The message was a coded signal that set in moon one of the dramatic moments of the cold war—the exchange of U-2 Pither and the triangle of the cold war—the exchange of U-2 Pither and the triangle of U-2 Pither and tri lot Francis Gary Powers for Russian the U.S. conducted its negotiations Colonel Rudolph Ivanovich Abel, a top through Donovan, who worked closely Soviet spy who had been imprisoned in the U.S. for the previous 4½ years. In this absorbing new book, Lawyer Donovan was received, Donovan was ready. ovan, the amateur diplomat who later No Recognition. To prevent securi-

ing up to the Berlin swap.

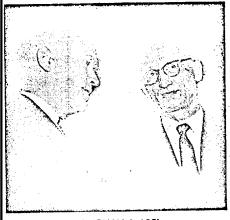
case appeared airtight; the FBI had an incident that might diplomatically bagged Abel with all the parapherna-lia of his trade—short-wave radios, hollowed-out bolts and tie clasps, coded messages, code book, microfilm equipment, and marked maps of major U.S. defense installations. Though Abel was found guilty, Donovan's contention that the Government's evidence had been illegally obtained without a warrant nearly caused the Supreme Court to reverse the conviction on appeal. Before sentence was passed, Donovan urged that the possible death penalty not be invoked because "it is possible that in the foresceable future an American of equivalent rank will be captured by Soviet Russia; at such time, an ex change of prisoners could be considered to be in the best interest of the U.S."

Private Citizen. Russia was most anx ious to get Abel back. After the trial a woman claiming to be Abel's wife wrote Donovan regularly from Eas Germany and hinted at the possibility of a deal. But U.S. security officials opposed an exchange; they were still hope ful that Abel might one day turn canary and spill what he knew about Sovie intelligence. Abel, however, was a tough customer. A scholarly intellectual who spoke six languages fluently, dabbled in theoretical mathematics, and was an accomplished amateur painter and musi

over Russia in 1960, the trade winds One day early in 1962, Brooklyn At- began to blow harder. Convinced that

regotiated the release of the Bay of ty leaks, U.S. intelligence officials gave Pigs prisoners, recounts the events leading up to the Berlin swap.

nis," secretly flew him to Berlin in a Donovan first met Abel in 1957 when military plane. But, officially, the U.S. the court appointed him to handle the mission in Berlin tried not to recognize Red spy's defense. The Government's that Donovan was in the city; fearing



DONOVAN & ABEL Saved by a trade wind.

to face with the eerie demimonde of Hebruary morning, the Red spy and international espionage. His main con- lowers passed each other without a tact was a purported second-string Rus- word in the middle of Berlin's Gliesian diplomat named Schischkin, whom ricker Bridge, which links the two sec-U.S. intelligence believed to be the top tors of the embattled city. Soviet spy in Europe. In cahoots with Strangers on a Bridge is both an elo-Schischkin were two women, who main-cuent brief for the American judicial tained that they were Abel's wife and system and a topnotch spy thriller. A daughter and now claimed East Ger-former OSS officer, Donovan mentions man citizenship. Suddenly the Reds be- in passing a number of the tricks of the cian, he never admitted either his real gan to play hard to get. Their ploy was trade. Best: one of Abel's subordinates name (Abel was a pseudonym) or even obvious; they hoped to badger Dono-announced his arrival in the U.S. by that he was a Red agent.

After Francis Powers was shot down U.S. recognition of East Germary. Manhattan's Central Park.

CPYRGHT

Donovan refused to play, and when he implicate the U.S., the mission refused threatened to break off negotiations, even to supply him with an interpreter, the Russians finally yielded. Abel was Across the Wall, Donovan came face flown to Berlin, and on a cold, cear

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